



# THE VOICE OF THE VALLEY

The Newsletter of the Lehigh Valley Gay and Lesbian Task Force / Vol. 1, Issue 4

**NEW YEAR 1995**

## **SPECIAL NOTE**

Members of the Task Force will receive in this newsletter their new membership cards. The lavender cards show your name, membership category and expiration date.

Members who joined prior to June 30, 1994 will be encouraged to renew their memberships by June 30, 1995. Anyone who joined after June 30, 1994 will be up for renewal one year after their enrollment date.

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## **The Voice of the Valley**

Published by  
the Lehigh Valley  
Gay and Lesbian  
Task Force  
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Lehigh Valley, PA  
18002-0253

Phone: 610-515-1551

## **Communications Committee**

Robert Roush, co-chair  
Frank Baran, co-chair  
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Editing and page design  
by Frank Baran

## **Employment discrimination** *Attorney to explain your rights in the workplace*

Can your boss fire you because you're gay or lesbian?

Get the facts on employment discrimination and your rights.

You are invited to a discussion sponsored by the Lehigh Valley Gay and Lesbian Task Force on Wednesday, January 11, at 7:30 p.m. in Northampton Community College's College Center.

Attorney Anne Felker of Bethlehem will explain existing laws on hiring and firing people based on their sexual orientation. A question-and-answer period will follow.

For information, call the Task Force at (610) 515-1551.

After a good deal of debate, the Task Force decided to open the meeting to the general public and newspaper reporters.

Proponents of inviting the news media said the issue of employment discrimination needs to be brought before

the public. Although more than 70 percent of Americans in recent polls favor barring discrimination based on sexual orientation, the vast majority assume those prohibitions already exist and therefore any rights we are seeking are "special rights."

Other Task Force members were reluctant to invite the news media, fearing that the presence of reporters would scare away gay men and lesbians who want to listen to the discussion but not if it means taking a risk of "outing" themselves. They felt it was more important that as many members of the gay community as possible learn of their employment rights – or lack of rights.

It was finally decided that newspaper reporters, but not television crews, would be invited. Newspaper reporters, if any

▼ Please see **EMPLOYMENT** on page 4

## **Task Force's first benefit show was a success**

The first major benefit for the Lehigh Valley Gay and Lesbian Task Force was a big hit.

"Freedom 2BU" drew a packed audience to Diamonz on Saturday, November 18. Eight entertainers sang, joked and even laid on a bed of spikes to raise money for the Task Force's campaign to fight discrimination against the gay, lesbian, bi and transgendered community.

The three-hour show raised more than \$2,000 and, with new people signing up during intermissions, put the Task Force over the 200 mark in individual and group memberships.

For a \$10 ticket, guests saw great local talent, ate their fill at a buffet and mingled with friends old and new.

With Brian Marks serving as emcee, the show

began with Pat Hartzell singing and playing the electronic keyboard. Lea Beyer, an impressionist and illusionist from New York City, kept the audience guessing and amused, and a husband-and-wife team, Kato, performed (she singing and he on the keyboard). Richard Gleaves, a former member of the Texas Gay Men's Chorus, serenaded. Francine Thunderpussy and Katiria delighted all. Harley the Professional Lunatic walked on stairs of machettes and had six people stand on him as he laid on a bed of nails.

Financially the show was a big success because of the generous contributions of the entertainers and vendors, each of whom were kind enough to donate talent, food or door prizes.

Thanks go out to the many people who helped

organize the event, especially Lenora and Nan at Diamonz and Renae Bennett, Jacqueline Marsh and Gail Hoover at the Task Force.

In addition, these businesses donated treats:

- Diamonz  
1913 W. Broad St.  
Bethlehem
- Iacocca's Catering  
132 S. 7th St.  
Allentown
- Emily's Ice Cream  
Raceway Shopping Center  
Nazareth
- Confetti Cafe  
462 Main St.  
Bethlehem
- Monterey Cafe  
817 Linden St.  
Allentown
- Viennese Pastries  
500 Main St.  
Bethlehem
- China King  
1700 Sullivan Trail  
Easton
- Mr. Bulky  
250 Lehigh Valley Mall  
Whitehall



# BLOWING THE WHISTLE

## Voters league helped defeat eight anti-gay candidates in the state

By CHRIS YOUNG  
and STEVE BLACK  
League of Gay and Lesbian Voters

In the 1994 General Election Voter's Guide, the League of Gay and Lesbian Voters identified 16 candidates who had strong ties to the Radical Right, the Christian Coalition and other right-wing groups. Eight of these candidates won and eight were defeated.

The eight who won their elections are Rick Santorum (U.S. Senate); George Gekas (Congress, 17th District, Harrisburg area); Phil English (Congress; 12th, Erie area); Art Hershey (state House, 13th, Chester County); Jeffrey Habay (state House, 30th, Allegheny County); Jerry Birmelin (state House, 139th, northeastern Pennsylvania); Paul Clymer (state House, 145th, Bucks County); and Colleen Sheehan (state House, 149th, Montgomery County). All are Republicans.

It is important to analyze why these candidates won. Four were incumbents (Gekas, Hershey, Birmelin and Clymer). Two had better organized campaigns than their Democratic opponents (Santorum and English). The other two won in Republican districts (Habay and Sheehan). Sheehan defeated pro-gay candidate Felice Weiner in a close race that used to be represented by Stephen Freind. Sheehan's affiliation with the Radical Right was not a prominent issue in the campaign.

The eight candidates who were affiliated with the Radical Right and Christian Coalition and were defeated are Peg Luksik (governor); Bill Choby (Congress, 12th District, Johnstown area); Mike McCormick (Congress, 20th, southwestern Pennsylvania); Bill Glassman (state House, 52nd, Fayette County); Debra Cruel (state House, 103rd,

Harrisburg); John Gibbons (state House, 121st, Luzerne County); Andy Roman (state House, 133rd, Bethlehem); and Richard Orlemann (state House, 136th, Easton). All were Republicans, except Luksik, who ran as an independent.

In races where these candidates' affiliation with the Radical Right was exposed, the candidate lost. Active campaigns to oppose Cruel's membership in the Pennsylvania Family Institute and McCormick's association with the Christian Coalition were undertaken in their districts. The gay and lesbian community had an active role in exposing these right-wing candidates.

In Easton, the gay and lesbian community took the leadership role in exposing Orlemann as county coordinator of the Christian Coalition. Steve Black, vice chair of the League of Gay and Lesbian Voters, and Dr. Manuel Gonzalez, president of the Lehigh Valley Gay and Lesbian Task Force, wrote letters to the editors of the *Allentown Morning Call* drawing attention to Orlemann's leadership position within the local Christian Coalition. After the letters appeared, Orlemann called a press conference to say he had resigned his position as county coordinator. He attacked Black and Gonzalez as "radical gay activists" and questioned their agenda.

Black responded by noting that Orlemann was "Pat Robertson's point-man in Northampton County and his comments today are an attempt to gain votes by attacking the gay and lesbian community. It's not going to work; the voters of Northampton County will not be swayed by bigotry and attacks of this sort."

Black noted, "Orlemann realized that the letters were written by members of the gay community and

his irrational homophobia overtook his rational political judgment. He called a press conference and attacked us, with the result of having two newspapers run the story on the front page of the local section. The articles quoted the original letters, allowed us to respond to his charges and drew more attention to his affiliation with the Christian Coalition than the original letters to the editor. I was disappointed that other liberal groups would not take a leadership role in exposing Orlemann. I contacted the Freedom to Learn Network, NOW-ABE and the Democratic Party, and none of them would do more than inform their members."

We draw these conclusions:

1. When it is revealed that candidates are associated with the Radical Right or Christian Coalition, those candidates lose votes. The gay and lesbian community must be more vigilant in identifying these candidates and must take a leadership role in organizing other liberal groups to help expose these candidates.

2. Because many districts have overwhelmingly Republican majorities, gay men and lesbians must work with progressive Republicans to defeat candidates associated with the Radical Right and Christian Coalition in primary elections. The Log Cabin Club can be instrumental in this effort.

3. The Christian Coalition, Citizens for Excellence in Education and other right-wing groups can be expected to field a record number of stealth candidates in the 1995 municipal elections when over 2,500 school directors will be elected in 500 districts across Pennsylvania. The gay and lesbian community must register and vote, especially in local elections.

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# Vacancies on Task Force board to be filled starting in January

Want to get involved?

Here's an opportunity: There are several vacancies on the board of directors of the Task Force, and you are welcome to apply.

In all, five seats must be filled. Three people have already expressed an interest.

Most recently, Jacqueline Marish and Michele Strohl resigned. That leaves seats of two women and three men to be filled.

Under the Task Force's bylaws, the board must reflect gender parity – that is, an equal balance between males and females. Also, because of the need to maintain stability on the board, half of the seats expire in May 1995 and the rest expire in May 1996.

Here's the rundown of the vacancies: the replacements for one man and one woman will serve through May 1996, and two men and one woman will serve through

May 1995.

Bobby Sweeney, whose involvement in gay issues in Lehigh Valley goes back to the heyday of Le-Hi-Ho, has told President Manny Gonzalez that he is interested in joining the board of directors.

Vacancies will be filled at the next meeting of the Task Force, on Wednesday, January 18, at 7:30 p.m. in Northampton Community College's College Center, Room 115.

If you wish to be considered for one of the vacancies, please send a letter of interest as soon as possible to Manny at LVGLTF, P.O. Box 20253, Lehigh Valley, PA 18002-0253, or call him at the Task Force Hotline at (610) 555-1551.

Board members are expected to have regular attendance, take part in at least one special program activity, assist in recruitment of volunteers and assist in fund-raising projects and events.

## News briefs

### Win a TV in raffle!

Plans are in the works for a raffle to raise money for Task Force programs.

The first prize: a television. Additional prizes include dinners to fine restaurants and a basket of cheer. Tickets will be \$1, and they will be on sale from Task Force members and gay business places in January.

At December's meeting, the board of directors scheduled the drawing for February 19, the date of the monthly bingo game at Diamonz. You don't have to be present at the bingo for the drawing, but what better way than to spend a wintery Sunday afternoon with friends!

### Task Force meetings

The board of directors meets the third Wednesday of each month at 7:30 p.m. at Northampton Community College's College Center, Room 115. The next meeting is January 18.

## You've always wanted to do it ...

Winter is the perfect time to learn how to make pottery

Call for a time to come and see what's involved.

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## JOIN US...

... in making the Lehigh Valley a better and safer place to live. You can help by becoming a member of the Task Force.



Name \_\_\_\_\_

Street address \_\_\_\_\_

City, State, ZIP \_\_\_\_\_

Municipality (City, borough, township) \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone \_\_\_\_\_

### \$15 Basic membership

☐

*Benefits: mailing list, referral database, volunteer opportunities, lesbian and gay community information, newsletter, a vote in meetings.*

### \$10 Student or senior member

☐

*Benefits: Same as above. However, students under 18 do not vote.*

### \$25 Family membership

☐

*Benefits: Same as basic member. This category is for domestic partners and their children living in the same household. Each person gets 1 vote, for a maximum of 2 votes per family. Children under 18 do not vote.*

### \$30 Organizational member

☐

*Benefits: newsletter, referral database, free listing in newsletter. No vote.*

### Contributor

☐

*Help the Task Force pay for mailings and other start-up expenses. Your donations would be very much appreciated.*

I'd like to get involved in a Task Force committee:

- ☐ Communications  
☐ Discrimination  
☐ Fundraising  
☐ Membership  
☐ Nominations  
☐ Systems and Structure  
☐ Youth Issues

Make check or money order payable to:

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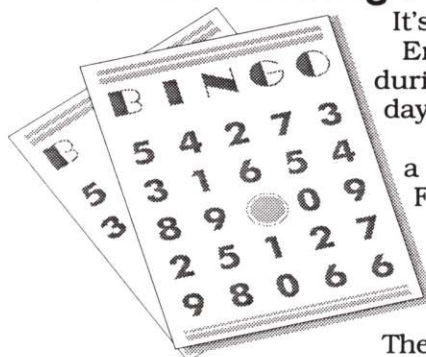
**P.O. Box 20253**

**Lehigh Valley, PA 18002-0253**

## Coming attractions

What's happening in the Lehigh Valley

### Afternoon of bingo set for Sunday, Jan. 15



It's bingo time again!

Enjoy the company of old and new friends during an afternoon of bingo at 3 p.m. Sunday, January 15, at Diamonz.

The first bingo, held in October, was such a smash that starting in 1995, the Task Force will conduct the games every month.

The games are \$1 for a regular card; \$2 for special cards, which entitle you to compete for products, services and Task Force T-shirts; or \$5 for the grand prize.

The proceeds will go to the Task Force's work in protecting your civil rights.

Come have a good time and do good for the cause.

## EMPLOYMENT

▼ Continued from page 1

arrive, would be asked not to interview people who wished to remain anonymous. If television crews show up, they would be instructed to stay outside the meeting hall. Any on-camera interviews would be limited to the speaker and representatives of the Task Force, shielding the audience.

These ground rules may apply to future events. But the Task Force board would like to know how you feel. Please write to Letters to the Editor, in care of LVGLTF, P.O. Box 20253, Lehigh Valley, PA 18002-0253. Your comments will be published in future issues of the Voice of the Valley newsletter. If you do not wish us to publish your name, please say so in your letter.

## Get the word out!

Do you want to reach the Lehigh Valley gay community with your product or service? An advertisement in The Voice of the Valley is the way to go.

The Task Force newsletter is distributed to members and patrons of gay-friendly establishments in Lehigh and Northampton counties. Total circulation is 1,000.

### Advertising rates

Full page	\$150
Half page	\$75
Quarter page	\$50
Business card	\$25

### Advertising deadlines

Mid-winter issue	February 1
Spring issue	April 1

To place an ad, call 691-7653.

## Have a question? Dial the Task Force

The Task Force's telephone hotline is in service. If you need information about the Task Force or events, or if you wish to report gay-bashings, hate crimes and employment discrimination, call the hotline at (610) 555-1551. Please leave a name and phone number where you can be reached, and we will get back to you as quickly as possible.

It's important to call about any anti-gay discrimination or hate crimes. We are keeping track of incidents so we can demonstrate to skeptical public officials that these problems exist.



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